(ii) Break down of equipment at loading point.

(iii) Power failures affecting crushing of coal through feeder breakers.

(iv) Less transportation of coal to the sidings due to break down of equipment and other reasons.

(c) The expenses on this account have to be borne by BCCL.

Hiring of Heavy Earth Movers Machinery to ECL

4602. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether hiring of Heavy Earth Movers machinery has been banned in Eastern Coalfield Ltd;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) if so, impact of this decision on the production of Coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. In pursuance of the directive of the Committee on Public Undertakings (COPU) contained in its 25th Report (1986-87) (8th Lok Sabha) on the examination of working of Eastern Coalfields Ltd., (ECL) the Govt. constituted an Expert Group in August, 1987 to look into the issues connected with hiring of HEMM by Eastern Coalfields Ltd. The Expert Group, inter-alia, recommended that the quantum of work to be done by hired HEMM should be pegged down to the level that bridges gap between the achievable capacity and the market demand and that hiring should be limited to exploitation of the marginal isolated patches only in an organised manner and phased out at the earliest. After due consideration of the recommendations of the Expert Group in January, 1988, the Govt., inter-alia, decided to dispense with the practice of hiring of HEMM in a phased manner in the next 3 years. Hiring of HEMM in ECL was discontinued from 1.4.1991. However, some contractors continued on the strength of Court order till the Court dismissed the same on 25.7.1991.

(c) The impact on coal production owing to stoppage of hired HEMM has been approximately quantified as 2.5 million tonnes per year from 1991-92.

[Translation]

Foreign Proposal to Establish Industrial Units in Delhi

4603. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some proposals have been received from the foreign countries to set up industrial units in the National Capital Territory of Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise alongwith the amount proposed to be invested in these industrial units; and

(c) the decision taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. 377 foreign direct investment proposals envisages Rs. 16382.07 crores have been approved by the Government during the Post Policy period i.e. from 1.8.91 to 31.07.96.

The details of such proposals viz. Name and country of foreign collaborator, equity investment involved, item of manufacture/activity are published by the Indian Investment Centre as a supplement to the Monthly Newsletter and copies of these are regularly supplied to the Parliament Library.

[English]

Coal Supply to State Electricity Boards

4604. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether various State Electricity Boards, including that of Maharashtra State have raised claims against stones supplied alongwith coal;

(b) whether Coal India Limited has reimbursed these claims to the State Electricity Boards;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the preventive actions being taken by Coal India Limited and the Coal Ministry to stop supply of stones mixed coal and avoid such claims against stones supplied?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c). State Electricity Boards (SEBs), including Maharashtra State Electricity Board, are unilaterally making deductions on coal bills on account of supply of oversized coal, stones etc. Such unilateral deductions are not acceptable to the coal companies. In most cases, the SEBs have not made payments for the amounts in dispute and hence the question of reimbursement of the amount by coal companies does not arise. Negotiations are being held with the SEBs for settling the disputed amounts mutually. Government has appointed eminent persons as umpires for resolving the disputed amounts. The amounts in dispute are likely to be resolved once the awards have been declared by the umpires.

(d) The steps being taken by the coal companies to improve the quality of coal supplies to consumers include the following:-

(i) An Action Plan for installation of feeder breakers and coal handling plants is being implemented to ensure quality of coal supplied.

(ii) Stones are being segregated at the time of loading of coal to the extent practicable.

(iii) Power utilities have been requested to post their representatives at loading points to undertake joint sampling of coal before it is despatched to them.

Participation in International Trade Fairs

4605. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Swiss fair ticks off Titan and other 'Made-in-India' exhibits" appearing in the 'Economic Times' dated August 6, 1996;

(b) if so, whether any protest was lodged with the International Fair Authorities against preventing Indian participation in Basle, Switzerland;

(c) if so, the reaction of IFA thereon;

(d) whether the Government propose to lay down some norms for participation in such international trade fairs and rebut the charge of practising a protectionist trade policy in view of India's free trade policy;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). M/s Titan International Marketing Ltd. has made a representation to the Committee of Exhibitors that lays down the criteria for participation in the International Watch, Clock and Jewellery Fair in Basle, Switzerland. However, the Committee of Exhibitors continues to maintain that one of the conditions laid down for participation by a country is that the country should have a liberal trade policy with regard to imports of watches of all origin and import tariff should not be higher than 20 per cent. Thus the matter remains unresolved.

(d) to (f). It is not possible for the Government of India to lay down norms for participation in international fairs organised by foreign private parties outside India. Government has taken up the matter with the Swiss authorities whose initial reaction has been that they have no control over the actions of the Committee of Exhibitors, a private party, that sets the norms for participation. Government is pursuing the matter with the Swiss authorities.

[Translation]

Excise Duty on Marble

4606. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representations from several marble trading organisations and people's representatives to decrease or abolish excise duty on marble and lime stone; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). There is no excise duty on limestone. Regarding marble, Government have received some representations that the excise duty on marble be abolished or reduced from the existing level of Rs. 30 per square metre. These are under consideration.

Foreign Investment in Agriculture

4607. SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH:
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign proposals cleared for the investment in agriculture sector during the current year alongwith the details thereof, country-wise;

(b) the names of such companies who have sent the proposals and the names of the States where investment is proposed to be made; and

(c) the details of foreign exchange likely to be received in the country every year?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b). 25 foreign direct investment proposals envisaging foreign direct investment of Rs. 45.03 crores have been approved by the Government during the period from 1.1.96 to 31.7.96 in the Agriculture Sector including Horticulture and Floriculture.

The details of such proposals viz. Name and country of foreign collaborator, equity investment involved, item of manufacture/activity are published by the Indian Investment Centre as a supplement to the Monthly Newsletter and copies of these are regularly supplied to the Parliament Library.